

News Release

Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Block Island NWR □ John H. Chafee NWR □ Ninigret NWR □ Sachuest Point NWR □ Trustum Pond NWR
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For Immediate Release

Date: September 24, 2015

For Further Information Contact:

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Public Comments Sought on the Sachuest Bay Resiliency Project

Charlestown, RI – The public is invited to provide any comments related to implementation of the Sachuest Bay Resiliency Project in Middletown, RI. In response to Hurricane Sandy, the Department of the Interior made funding available from the Disaster Relief and Appropriations Act to enhance and improve the resiliency of coastal areas and communities from future storms.

Working together, the Town of Middletown, Aquidneck Land Trust, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Center for Ecosystem Restoration, the Preservation Society of Newport and others developed the Sachuest Bay Resiliency Project, which has received \$2,289,680.00 in federal funding through a competitive grant process. The Fish and Wildlife Service is assisting these groups in the planning phases of the project.

The Sachuest Bay project includes a variety of actions which, when taken together, are designed to improve the resiliency of the area and the community to future storm events. The actions proposed to be implemented include:

- Control of non-native and undesirable plant species across 325 acres in the Norman Bird Sanctuary. This will improve the condition of native habitats and the wildlife resources which use these areas;
- Development of a land conservation plan by the Aquidneck Land Trust which could lead to conservation of land parcels for water quality protection, open space, and wildlife habitat;
- Construction of 8 dune walkover structures at Second Beach to enhance the dune complex and help prevent overwash and storm damage to the dunes, parking lot, and related facilities to prevent pedestrian use from damaging the dunes;
- Dune restoration along Second Beach, one of the largest intact dune complexes in Southern New England, by filling eroded areas, applying geotextile reinforcements.
- Construction of up to 10 best management sites designed to directly improve water quality.

A project summary which includes maps and general designs can be found on and downloaded from the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex website:

[http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Ninigret/About the Complex/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Ninigret/About_the_Complex/)

Or, a hard copy of the project summary can be viewed at the Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Middletown, RI during normal business hours.

Written comments can either be dropped off at the Sachuest Point NWR Visitor Center or mailed to:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Refuge Manager
50 Bend Road
Charlestown, RI 02813

Comments must be received by October 26, 2015.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas.

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